September 14, 2015

Dear **(insert school name)** Parents,

We are excited to announce the start of the **(insert school name)** History Day (\_HD) research season! On Wednesday, February 20, each student will submit a research project for a grade in their social studies class on the theme, “**(insert theme)**.” Projects from each grade level will be viewed by the **(insert school name)** family on \_HD (Wednesday, January 27). Our pool of judges will be members of the community, and prizes will be handed out to students whose projects are chosen as exemplars. In addition to our school site recognition, projects will be entered in the (**insert county**) County History Day competition that will take place on Saturday, March 5, 2016. Champions from this competition will advance to the state competition that will take place on May 6-7 in Rocklin, CA.

In order to make this a memorable learning experience, we need the support of all our **(insert school name)** families. We will introduce History Day to students and go over all of the requirements in class on September 28th. Since this assignment is required of all students and will be taking place over the span of two quarters, there will be a few important deadlines that students will have to meet. The deadlines are as follows:

* Thursday, October 1 - Parent Night (to discuss the stages of research)
* Tuesday, October 13 - Topics must be submitted for teacher approval
* Thursday, October 29 - Thesis proposal and preliminary annotated bibliography due (6 sources due)
* Thursday, November 12 - Annotated Bibliography (15 sources due)
* Tuesday, December 8 - Project outline/plan/storyboard due
* Tuesday, January 13 - Process paper and bibliography due
* Wednesday, January 20 -Projects due
* Thursday, January 21 – **(insert school name)** History Day celebration

The deadlines are a way to ensure that our students are making adequate progress towards completing the project. Since the deadlines are clearly stated and made aware in advance, students will lose points for missing a deadline. Deadlines are not suggestions, but dates that we expect the desired work to be completed. Students will be given more specific information on all aspects of the project as the deadlines approach. The students will also be given some class time to work on these projects but the majority of the project work will need to be completed at home.

Plagiarism is a problem that has been around for years. We would like you to know the definition of plagiarism and be aware of the penalties associated with plagiarism in any form. Plagiarism is defined as the following:

* Turning in someone else's work as your own.
* Copying words or ideas from someone else without citing the source.
* Failing to put a quotation in quotation marks.
* Giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without citing the source
* Copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not.

The social studies department will be teaching your students how to cite a source in the proper format throughout the course of this project. Any students who are caught plagiarizing will receive a zero on that portion of the project and may be subject to further disciplinary action as well.

We ask that you sign below to acknowledge that you are aware of the project’s deadlines and expectations. It is our hope that you join your student in this educational journey and support them throughout the process. Please visit one of the websites below for more information:

(**insert county**) County History Day: (**insert county website**)

National History Day, California: [www.nhdca.org](http://www.nhdca.org)

Thank you for the continued support.

Sincerely,

**(insert school name)** Social Studies Team

